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ABSTRACT

This report examines the critical role that child care plays in the way an increasing number of children are growing, learning, and preparing for school and for life. Chapter one of the report examines the current child care situation in the United States and recommends that the nation: (1) set priorities for the child care system; (2) assist low income families; (3) improve staff compensation and training; (4) improve family child care homes; (5) improve care for infants and toddlers; (6) improve information for families; and (7) improve child care standards. Chapter two discusses the quality of child care and the impact of child care quality on child development. Chapter three examines the economics of child care, including what parents spend, the full cost of quality child care, and government child care programs. Chapter four presents strategies for improving the quality of the child care system along the line of the recommendations already advanced. Chapter five discusses the need to build public-private partnerships for child care delivery, focusing on the role of business in improving child care. Included are five pages of endnotes and an appendix discussing the major federal child programs. (MDM)

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